

Creation of the World



Genesis 1 to 2:3; Psalm 33:6;
John 1:1-3; Hebrews 11:3



‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth’ (Genesis 1:1). In the beginning of this series, we are going to explore the Bible’s account of the creation story. We’ll think about what it means for us today and consider the unanswered questions surrounding the creation of the world. We’ll take time to look at the different ways Christians interpret the creation story and reflect on what we personally believe. Most importantly, we’ll give thanks for the wonder of God’s world.

You will need:

- A4 paper
- Felt-tips / coloured pencils
- Arts and crafts supplies (optional)
- Group access to the internet via a phone, tablet or laptop, for research during the Sound Check section
- Exploring Creation handout (optional)



Beat

Leader’s notes:

Give each member of the group a piece of paper and provide felt-tips or coloured pencils. You can even take this a step further and provide other arts and crafts supplies, including pictures to create a collage, if that is something that your group would enjoy. Explain that today’s Bassline is all about God’s creation. If they could go anywhere in the world to spend time in God’s creation, where would they choose? Would it be by the sea or at the top of a mountain or maybe in a meadow? Ask the group to spend 5-10 minutes creating a picture of their place. When they have finished their picture, they can share it with the rest of the group and explain why they have chosen it.

They will need to use these pictures again as part of the Selah section.

Ask:

What amazes you the most about God's creation?

 **Bridge****Ask:**

What is your response to the following quote written in February 1944 by Anne Frank? Do you agree?

'The best remedy for those who are frightened, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere they can be alone, alone with the sky, nature and God. For then and only then can you feel that everything is as it should be and that God wants people to be happy amid nature's beauty and simplicity. As long as this exists, and that should be for ever, I know that there will be solace for every sorrow, whatever the circumstances. I firmly believe that nature can bring comfort to all who suffer.'

— Anne Frank

 **Amplify****Say:**

We are going to Amplify Genesis 1 to 2:3 and consider how the Bible describes the world's creation.

Leader's notes:

Working in small groups, ask the young people to read Genesis 1 to 2:1 and outline what happened on each day of creation. Time the group, so that they have only six minutes to complete the task, so they need to work quickly. When the six minutes are complete, ask them to sit quietly as you time an extra minute. When they have had their minute of 'rest', share together what happened on the seventh day of creation.

Read:

² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

— (Genesis 2:2-3)

Leader's notes:

Share together what happened on each day of creation.

Ask:

Why do you think God set aside the seventh day for rest?

Say:

In The Salvation Army, our second Doctrine states:

'We believe that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.'

Ask:

Where do you see evidence of God as creator, preserver and governor in the words of Genesis 1?

Leader's notes:

Share out the following three Bible references and ask a member of the group to read them aloud.

**⁶ By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
their starry host by the breath of his mouth.**

– (Psalm 33:6)

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

– (John 1:1-3)

³ By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

– (Hebrews 11:3)

Ask:

What do these three Scripture readings suggest about how the world was created?

Say:

When we read in Genesis 1:1, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,' it does not mean that this was the beginning of God. Christians believe that God was there before the world began and created it out of nothing. This is sometimes known as *ex nihilo*, which is Latin for 'out of nothing'.

Ask:

- What do you think of the idea that God created the world *ex nihilo*?
- In what ways is it difficult to grasp how the world began?
- What do you believe about the creation account in the Bible?

Leader's notes:

Read and discuss the following information from *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine*. It can be a difficult topic to grasp, so allow space for the young people to explore how they feel, as it may not be something they have really considered before.

'To treat the Bible as if it were a scientific text book is not helpful to either theology or science. The authors of the biblical creation narratives are telling a story about a God

of grace and power who is bringing the universe to be out of nothing. Their stories complement the scientific experience of unity and order in the universe. They tell of the human condition, of the unique status of humanity and of our relationship to our creator God and to the world. However, the writers are not suggesting that this story is a scientific account of the origins of the universe.'

– *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* p41

Say:

The Bible tells us that God created the world but does not specify the details of how it was created.

Ask:

- Are you OK with not knowing the exact details of how the world was created?
- Do you think we can ever know precisely how the world was created? Explain your thoughts.

Say:

We may not know exactly how God created the world, but we do get a glimpse of his feelings about it.

Ask:

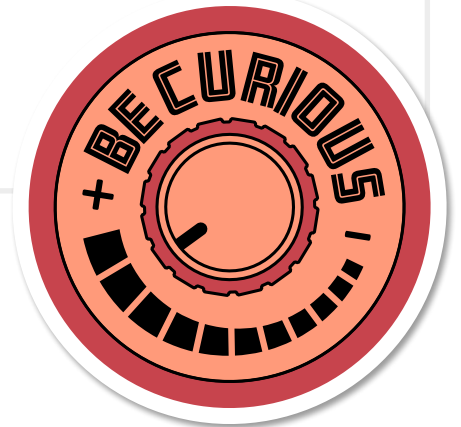
- What phrase is repeated throughout Genesis 1?
- What does it tell us about how God views his creation and how we should view the world he has made?

 **Bridge****Leader's notes:**

Before moving on to the Sound Check section, you may want to watch the following clip with your group to provide a summary of Genesis 1.

Watch:

The Gospel Project for Kids: The Creation Story (3:05)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=cstDniigA-w

 **Sound Check****Leader's notes:**

Today's Sound Check encourages the young people to explore some of the different perspectives Christians across the globe hold regarding creation. It also considers the

relationship between God and science. You can work through the resources together, or allocate different small groups to watch and discuss the clips and feed back to the whole group. All of these resources can also be found on the Exploring Creation handout. A byproduct of this activity will hopefully be to explore how we can disagree agreeably with the opinions of others.

Resource One – The Creation Museum

Explore the resources available on the Creation Museum website and discuss how you think the creators interpret the creation story.

According to the website: ‘The Creation Museum shows why God’s infallible Word, rather than man’s faulty assumptions, is the place to begin if we want to make sense of our world.’

<https://creationmuseum.org/about>

You may want to watch the following clip to see how the Creation Museum views the relationship between God and Science.

Watch: A Scientist Visits A Creationist Museum – Skeptic Stream (4:26)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1xUiuZuUuw

Resource Two – BioLogos

Explore the resources available on the BioLogos website and discuss how you think they may interpret the creation story.

<https://biologos.org>

You may want to watch the following clip, which gives an example of how BioLogos views the relationship between God and Science.

Watch: Evolution & God – BioLogos (2:47)

<https://biologos.org/resources/evolution-god>

Leader’s notes:

Encourage the group to share and discuss what they have discovered. To close this part of Bassline, read and discuss the following quote:

‘Our study of Genesis 1 will point up some differences between Christians in approaches, interpretations and conclusions. We must recognise that these are differences between believers, between people who are sincerely trying to understand biblical teaching. However strongly we support a given view, we must not be tempted to judge opposing viewpoints as being non-Christian. These matters have been debated for many centuries, and still, the differences persist. So we must accept as a starting premise that the issues surrounding Genesis 1 are sufficiently cloudy that no one view can be considered the Christian view.’

– Richard T Wright, quoted in The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine p41

 **Bridge**

Ask:

What did you find most interesting about both the Creation Museum and Biologos's approach to God and science?

 **Selah**

Say:

For our Selah section today, we are going to take a moment to pause and thank God for his amazing creation. As you watch the clip, take in the wonder of God's creation and write a prayer of thanksgiving. When the clip finishes, we'll share our prayers together.

Leader's notes:

The young people can write their prayer on the landscape picture they created in the Beat section.

Watch:

The Beauty of Earth – The Beauty Of (5:43)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cl_kXbhTi8k

 **Coda**

Say:

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.

Ask:

As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?

What is the one thing you will take away from this session regarding the wonder of God's creation?

Leader's notes:

Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.



Exploring Creation

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Remember ...

‘Our study of Genesis 1 will point up some differences between Christians in approaches, interpretations and conclusions. We must recognise that these are differences between believers, between people who are sincerely trying to understand biblical teaching. However strongly we support a given view, we must not be tempted to judge opposing viewpoints as being non-Christian. These matters have been debated for many centuries, and still, the differences persist. So we must accept as a starting premise that the issues surrounding Genesis 1 are sufficiently cloudy that no one view can be considered the Christian view.’